

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 17-20 are pending in the application, with claims 8-16 being canceled due to their withdrawal from consideration in a final restriction requirement. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the nature of the invention and newly presented claims 17-20 correspond with subject matter described in the Office Action as being allowable.

Cancellation of any subject matter is not to be construed as abandonment thereof, as applicants reserve the right to again present the same or related subject matter in this or a continuing application.

The examined claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by teachings of U.S. Patent 6,054,087 to Noirot et al. (for claim 1) and U.S. Patent 5,840,225 to Kikuchi et al. (for claims 1-3). However, significant differences between the claimed invention and the teachings of these documents render the rejection improper.

Applicants invention is an insert molding apparatus, which can be used to attach an insert to a molded article in a manner that does not permit the molding material to bleed into, or over, the insert. Therefore, an elevator opening 124, into which an insert can be positioned into a molding cavity, is provided with an inwardly directed lip 126 that can function to “clamp” the periphery of the insert to prevent flow of the molding material around the peripheral edge of the insert. The specification explains that the clamping should be tight along the entire insert periphery (see, for example, the sentence bridging pages 13 and 14), and applicants have now amended claim 1 to clarify that the lip will provide this function.

This important feature of the claimed invention is not present in either of the applied patents. Both of the patents relate to molding a polymer against a fabric material. Noirot et al. do not describe a feature that clamps about the entire periphery of an insert, as only a portion of the fabric is clamped between mold portions and the fabric serves to seal the molding cavity; an area of the fabric extends beyond the

clamped area, outside of the cavity. Kikuchi et al. do not even describe insert molding, but are merely bonding a fabric layer to a surface of a molded foam cushion article; again, the fabric serves to seal the molding cavity and extends beyond the edges of the cavity. These teachings are not related to the presently claimed invention, and the rejections should now be withdrawn.

Claims 4-7 were described as containing allowable subject matter. Since independent claim 1 is considered to be patentable over the applied documents, applicants do not believe that these dependent claims require any amendment.

As all of the pending claims are believed to be patentable, entry of the amendment and an early notification of allowability are respectfully solicited. However, if any minor matters remain to be resolved before disposition of the application, kindly contact the undersigned to arrange for a telephonic or personal interview.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert A. Franks
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 28,605

Patent Department (K-6-1, 1990)
Schering-Plough Corporation
2000 Galloping Hill Road
Kenilworth, New Jersey 07033-0530
Telephone (908) 298-2908
Facsimile (908) 298-5388